

unique flexibility, many Gulf Coast charter schools were able to reopen quickly, and many of the public schools that have reopened in New Orleans now operate as charter schools. By enabling these children to continue their education, charter schools are helping families and demonstrating a deep compassion for America's students.

We must give every child the best opportunity to learn and succeed in life. Charter schools help prepare our next generation of leaders and help ensure that America continues to succeed in the world.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 30 through May 6, 2006, as National Charter Schools Week. I appreciate our Nation's charter schools, teachers, and administrators, and I call on parents of charter school students to share their successes and help all Americans understand more about the important work of charter schools.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 8008 of April 28, 2006

Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, 2006

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

During Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, we honor and celebrate the millions of Asian/Pacific Americans whose contributions have helped make America a strong, vibrant, and free society.

Asian/Pacific Americans represent many nations and ethnicities, each with its own culture, heritage, language, and experience. Across our country, this diverse group of people has excelled in all walks of life. Their talent and hard work have added to the success and prosperity of our Nation and helped make America a leader in the world. They have helped shape America's character and identity through their strong values, love of family, and commitment to community. America is especially grateful to the many Asian/Pacific Americans who have courageously answered the call to defend freedom as members of our Armed Forces. The sacrifices of these brave men and women help preserve the ideals of our country's founding and make the world a safer place.

To honor the achievements and contributions of Asian/Pacific Americans, the Congress, by Public Law 102-450 as amended, has designated the month of May each year as "Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 2006 as Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month. I call upon the people of the United States

to learn more about the history of Asian/Pacific Americans and their role in our national story and to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-eighth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 8009 of April 28, 2006

Older Americans Month, 2006

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Older Americans represent the finest qualities of our Nation. During Older Americans Month, we honor our older citizens, celebrate their many accomplishments, and learn from their experiences.

Across our country, older Americans are demonstrating personal strength and compassion and are redefining the experience of aging. They are leading active lives, serving in their communities, and reaching out to their fellow Americans. Through organizations like Senior Corps, they are mentoring children, helping victims of natural disasters, and caring for citizens with disabilities. Their good works are changing the lives of many individuals and contributing to the strength of America.

This year's theme, "Choices for Independence," reflects the importance of our citizens making retirement, lifestyle, and health choices that enhance their quality of life as they grow older. My Administration is committed to strengthening senior programs and ensuring the health and retirement security of older Americans. The Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 provides for the biggest improvement in health care for our seniors in nearly 40 years. In addition, the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit, Medicare Part D, is helping seniors receive the prescription drugs they need at reduced costs.

Our Nation is blessed by our seniors. These individuals teach us lessons of the past, set an example for younger generations, and demonstrate the generosity and love for which Americans are known. This month, I encourage all our citizens to spend time with America's seniors.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 2006 as Older Americans Month. I appreciate our senior citizens for their achievements and contributions to our Nation. I also commend the Federal, State, local, and tribal organizations, service and health care providers, caregivers, and volunteers who dedicate their time and talents to our seniors. I urge all citizens to honor their elders and reaf-